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Initial Housing Element Robersonville, North Carolina




September 1978

INITIAL HOUSING ELEMENT

ROBERSONVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

SEPTEMBER 1978

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SUMMARY STATEMENT

Robersonville Initial Housing Element

The Initial Housing Element for Robersonville includes an analysis of the factors affecting housing conditions and the increase of housing stock in the town. The factors considered included population and economic trends, housing conditions, crowding conditions, housing needs and community facilities availability. Based upon an analysis of these conditions and upon the goals and objectives determined by the town's Planning Board, future housing is projected for the town. Accompanying the housing element is a discussion of public actions and other measures recommended to achieve implementation of the housing element.

Essential parts of the housing element are explained below. The reference numbers are to paragraphs of the Federal Register of 8/22/75 and amendments to it of 2/1/77.

Reference

A letter of transmittal is found on the first page of this document. 600.73 (a)

The following comments describe how each housing element requirement has been

met: 600.73 (c)

- 1) A data analysis of housing conditions is found on pages 19 to 21 and 22 to 24. 600.70 (a), (b)
- 2) Projected needs by geographic sectors are found on pages 19 to 21 and 25 to 30. 600.70 (a), (b)
- 3) Broad goals and measurable annual objectives are found on pages 31 and 32. 600.67 (b)
- 4) Policies to eliminate discrimination are found on page 34. 600.70 (a), (2)
- 5) Policies to preserve the existing housing stock are found on pages 32, 26 and 33. 600.70 (a), (3)
- 6) Coordination mechanisms with other levels of functional planning, policy development and investment strategies are found on pages 34 and 35. 600.70 (a), (4)
- 7) Defined policies, strategies and proposals to accomplish goals and objectives are found on pages 33 and 34. 600.70 (b), (2) or (3)
- 8) A defined set of criteria for future evaluation of housing programs and activities is found on page 35. 600.67 (b)

- 9) A projected distribution of housing resources (assisted and non-assisted) by range of housing types is found on pages 25 to 30. 600.70 (b) (2) or (3)
- 10) The environmental assessment is found on pages 36 to 39. 600.65 (b)
- 11) The historic preservation assessment is found on pages 40 to 43. 600.66 (d)

The Land Development Plan Update of Robersonville is being submitted for certification along with the Initial Housing Element. 600.73 (c), (d)

The Citation of Supporting documents is found on pages 1 and 2. 600.73 (c), (d)

This document has been approved by the Robersonville Board of Commissioners as noted in the letter of transmittal. 600.73 (e), (1)

The Robersonville Initial Housing Element is consistent with the following programs: 600.73 (c) (6)

Coastal Area Management Act (Robersonville is not in an area directly affected by this act)

Areawide Waste Treatment Management Program

Pollution Control Act of 1972

State Implementation Plan of Clean Air Act
of 1967 as amended

State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
of Land and Water Conservation Fund Act
of 1965, as amended.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the three basic human needs is the requirement for shelter. For a growing proportion of our nations, population, good housing is difficult, if not nearly impossible, to obtain. The provision of an adequate supply of housing in a safe and attractive residential environment is a major concern of the Town of Robersonville.

This study is intended to supply town officials with needed information on existing housing conditions, housing supply and demand possible strategies for promoting an adequate supply of safe housing. A secondary but important purpose for this study is to provide technical information which will prove helpful in the preparation of applications for community development grants at the state and federal level. This report will also meet HUD housing element requirements for planning program certification.

To fulfill this task the Town of Robersonville contracted with the Mid-East Commission for the services of a professional planner to perform this study and other needed planning work. This report is one element of that planning contract.

The first part of this study consists of an analysis of the population and economic conditions which will affect the future need for housing within the town. This is followed by an assessment of present housing conditions within Robersonville. An evaluation of housing demand is presented in the next part of the study. This analysis includes a projection of housing need in accordance with the future population, household size and projected income levels of the community. The housing goals and objectives for the town are listed and finally suggested methods for meeting the housing needs are provided. This section includes suggested policies, a distribution program, strategies and implementation procedures. Environmental and Historic assessments are provided in the appendices.

Robersonville has an established housing authority which supplies 50 units for the elderly and low income families and it is presently engaged in activities to secure additional units for low income families. These activities will be further discussed in the section dealing with methods to meet housing needs. The Land Development Plan for Robersonville

adopted in 1969 takes note of existing housing conditions and suggests stricter enforcement of the building codes. An evaluation of the change in housing conditions will be made in the housing inventory section. Robersonville enforces both the building code and a zoning ordinance and specific town employees are designated as the zoning administrator and the building official. The town is currently revising its zoning ordinance and land development plan in order to assure an up to date planning program.

CHAPTER I

Population



CHAPTER I

Population

Population Trends

As the population of a community increases the need for additional housing also increases. The population growth for Robersonville has been relatively constant for the last half century. Recently, however, the population growth within the town has been less than what it has experienced earlier. In general, an increase in an area's population may be attributed to one or more of three general factors: natural increase, in-migration and expansion of inhabited territory. All of the factors which have had a significant influence will be examined.

The increase in Robersonville's population since 1930 was relatively constant until 1970 but since then it does not appear to have increased as rapidly (see graph). A comparison of census information on age distribution indicates that the relative size of the age groupings remained roughly equal (see table 2). Table 1 provides a distribution of the town's population by age and sex between the period 1930 and 1960 (information for 1970 is not available). This data tends to indicate that natural increase i. e., more local births than deaths, can not entirely explain Robersonville's gain in population. When comparisons are made with one age group in a ten year period to the next older group during the next period it is apparent that the second group is larger than would be expected. For example a comparison between those under 5 years of age in 1930 can not completely explain the increase in population of those between 4 and 14 in 1940.

A further indication of in-migration and birth rates can be ascertained through the child population expansion ratio, which was .992 in 1970. The child population expansion ratio measures the growth of a population through the expansion or diminution of the number of children in the age category of 5 to 9 compared with those in the category of 10 to 14. The ratio should be near 1.0 for a population which is replacing itself. Since the ratio for 1970 was very near 1.0 the expansion of Robersonville's population during the decade of the expansion ratio indicates that an increased amount of in-migration has occurred. The current child population expansion ratio is estimated to be .828 which is considerably lower than the 1970 figure.

TABLE 1

GENERAL POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

OF

ROBERSONVILLE BY AGE AND SEX-1930-1960

	<u>1930</u>		<u>1940</u>		<u>1950</u>		<u>1960</u>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under		Male and Female		Male and Female		Male and Female		Male and Female
5	--	98	72	57	83	64	76	89
5-14	--	283	126	120	139	108	155	145
15-21	--	45	89	96	56	51	---	---
21-65	--	680	363	414	358	436	---	---
Over 65	--	75	36	34	55	64	78	109
Total		1181	686	721	691	723	799	885
				1407		1414		1684
				70		119		187
				777		794		---
				185		107		---
				246		247		300
				129		147		165

The expansion of inhabited territory by a municipality is usually identified with the process of annexation but circumstances which are unique to a community may affect population growth in other ways. Generally, an incorporated area grows until it is nearly completely developed. The community may then decide to expand the political bounds of the municipality through annexation. If political, economic and physical considerations warrant the expansion then additional territory may be added through prescribed legal measures. If a municipality can not expand yet it is nearly fully developed then it will be unable to continue to enlarge its population size at its previous growth rate.

In the case of Robersonville, the town has experienced a decline in population growth (see chart). The town is not yet fully developed within its corporate limits but physical restrictions prevent development. Since 1970 Robersonville has not experienced significant population increases. The area within the town limits which lies to the north east can not be served by the sanitary sewage system without special additional sewer line facilities. Because of cost limitations the town is presently unable to provide these facilities. The town may soon be able to secure the required facilities and development will be able to occur in the east and north east sections of the town. Projections and analyses in this report are based upon the assumption that development within the east and northeast of town will be feasible.

Population Composition

An examination of the age characteristics of Robersonville is helpful in determining the kinds of housing which will be required in the future. A high proportion of people in young adult age brackets may indicate the presence of a relatively large number of newly formed households. The majority of these households would not be seeking nor could they easily afford large detached single family houses. People in this age group would generally require less expensive living accommodations, such as apartments, mobile homes or economic single family dwelling units. This is especially true for recently married couples who face all the costly initial expense of setting up a home. On the other extreme a significant percentage of older people in the community may indicate a need for apartment type dwellings or units with special features because fixed incomes and declining physical abilities may make conventional single family homes too costly to keep and impractical to maintain. For middle aged people, the typical single family home may be the answer, as these people are often economically established in life and have a family to house. Therefore, large percentages of people in the middle age grouping and a large proportion of the population in the young age grouping may indicate a continuing need for single family housing units.

Table 2 provides a percentage distribution of age groups in Robersonville between the years 1930 and 1960. This table indicates that the town has maintained the same relative proportions within its population for the thirty year period covered by the table. There is some indication, however, that Robersonville may have a higher proportion of elderly within the population at the present time than it had in the past (see table 2).

Figure 2 shows a current (1978) estimate of the population distribution within Robersonville. The average age within the town is approximately 34 years. The median age in 1970 was determined to be 34.8 years while these two figures can not be directly compared there is some indication that the towns age composition has not changed significantly in the past eight years.

There appears to be a slight reduction in Robersonville's average household size over the past twenty-eight years. The current estimate of average household size is 2.83 persons per household as indicated in figure 4. In 1970 there were found to be 2.93 persons per household and in 1960 the average household size is estimated to have been 3.14 persons per household. The size of the households within Robersonville is clearly declining although not as rapidly as in the past. The rate of decline in household size has been considerably reduced and all projections considering the kind of size of housing required will take this into account.

Besides age and household characteristics of the population racial composition should also be considered. This is necessary, because there is often a high correlation between housing assistance needs and minority groups. The current (1978) estimate for Robersonville is that 44% of the population is Black and 56% is White. Figure 3 presents the estimated age distribution and racial composition of the town. From this graph it is apparent that the Black minority population is more evenly distributed throughout the age groupings while the White population is apparently concentrated in the 19-59 age category which is the period of prime employment eligibility. The estimated current (1978) average Black household size somewhat higher than that of the town as a whole with 3.49 persons per household. The average household size for the Black population has also been declining over the past 28 years and there may soon be very little difference between the averages for the town as a whole those for the Black population of Robersonville (see figure 3).

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

BY AGE 1930-1960

	<u>1930</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>
Under				
5	8.30%	9.17%	10.40%	9.80%
5-14	23.96%	17.48%	17.47%	17.81
15-21	3.81%	13.15%	7.56%	-----
21-65	57.58%	55.22%	56.15%	-----
Over 65	6.35%	4.98%	8.42%	11.10%

If the past demographic conditions are indicative of the towns future population characteristics then Robersonville will require more single family units than any other type. The distribution of housing size should be shifted toward one, two and three bedroom units. Since market conditions are unpredictable for short time periods (within a three year business cycle) provisions should be made to also permit apartments, mobile homes, small single family units and duplexes or condominiums. Robersonville's population will probably retain its historic population distribution for the foreseeable future. Certain factors may affect the distribution somewhat. The older population of the community may increase simply because the population of the Nation as a whole is getting older. This is, in part, due to improved health care for many segments of the population. Robersonville may also increase its proportion of younger adults. The town provides a pleasant and attractive living environment with a potentially increasing number of economic opportunities. There appears to be a trend throughout the nation of a diminished attraction of people to metropolitan areas. Smaller communities are now being favored over larger ones by a significant part of the population. Robersonville may soon find that it is retaining most of its young adult population and that more young adult families are moving into town.

Population Projections

Presently the current and future circumstances seem to support a continuous growth pattern for Robersonville. Projections are generally made to give a ball park estimate of the expected future conditions of a community. Growth, especially the population growth in a community, is tied to sensitive economic conditions. At times the growth rate for a locality far exceeds the expected one because adequate financial resources were made available for expansion, at other times the growth rate may be below the anticipated one because of an economic downturn. Over the long run, however, such projections are generally very accurate.

The population projections for Robersonville were based upon the historical population growth pattern of the town for the last half century. The mathematical technique is called linear regression. The probable accuracy of this projection was tested and it was found to be reliable in at least 99 out of 100 instances. This test for reliability indicates that the projections have a very good chance of being fairly accurate. The projections and past population figures are found on table 3.

TABLE 3
POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS
ROBERSONVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>		<u>Population</u>	<u>Growth Rate</u>
1930	1181	-----	1980	2081	8.15%
1940	1407	16.06%	1985	2173	8.15%
1950	1414	0.50%	1990	2265	8.15%
1960	1684	16.03%	1995	2358	8.15%
1970	1910	11.83%	2000	2450	8.15%
1976	2050	11.83%*			

Figure 1

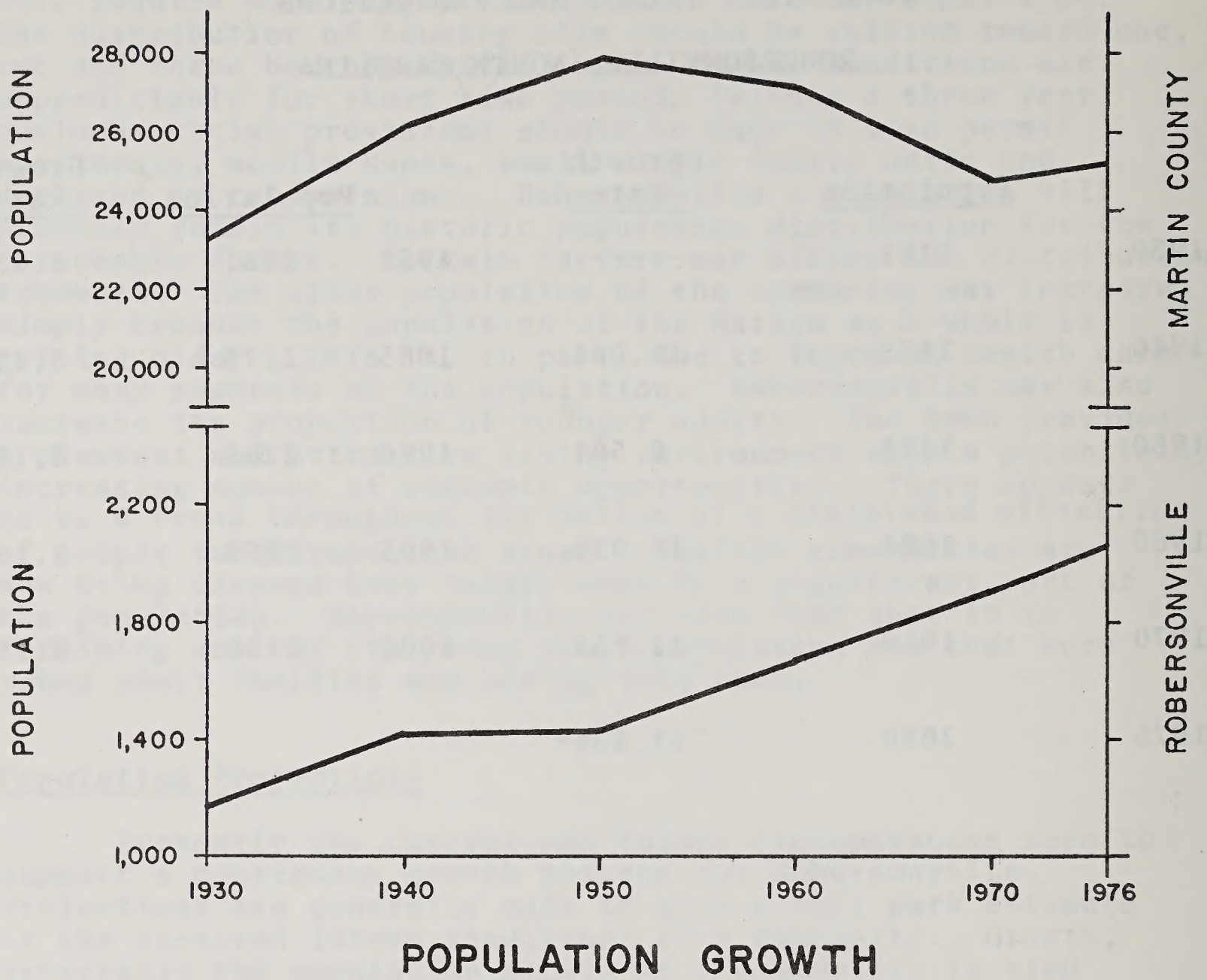


Figure 2

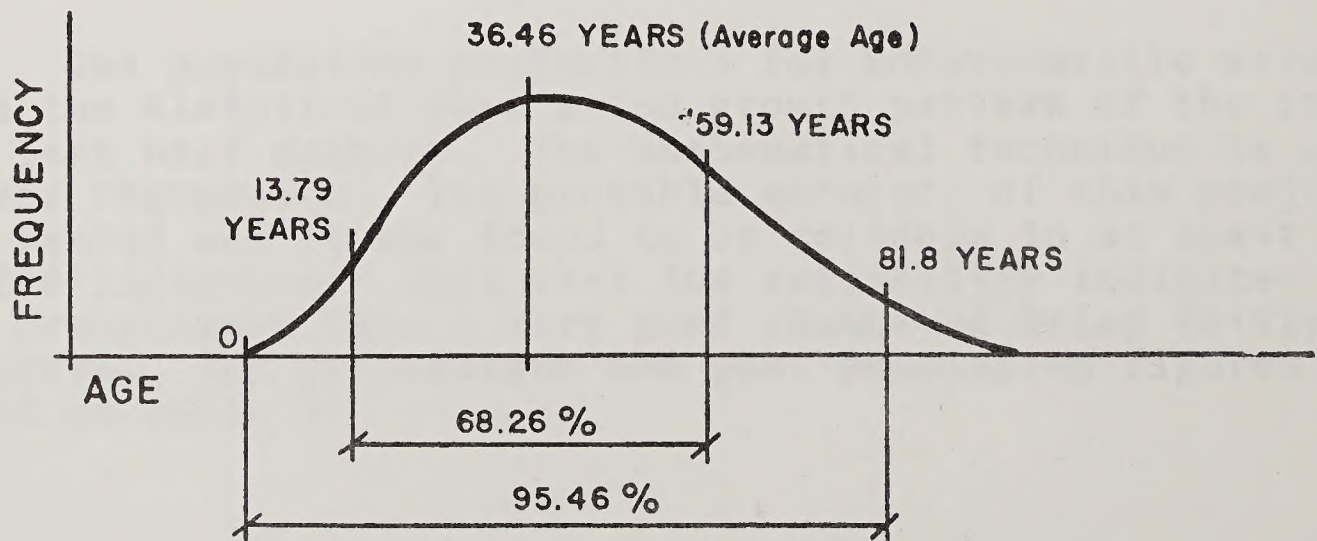


Figure 3

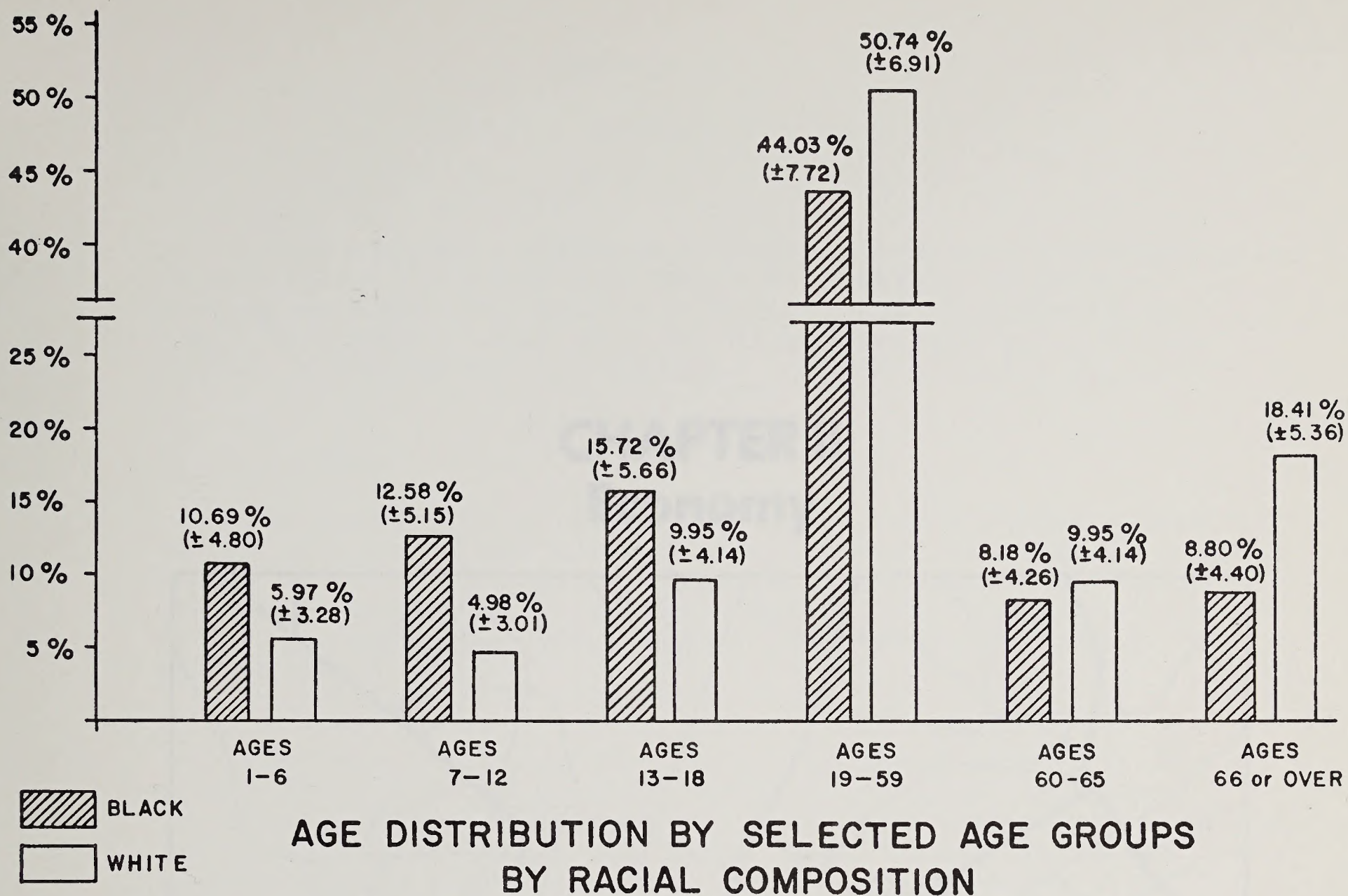
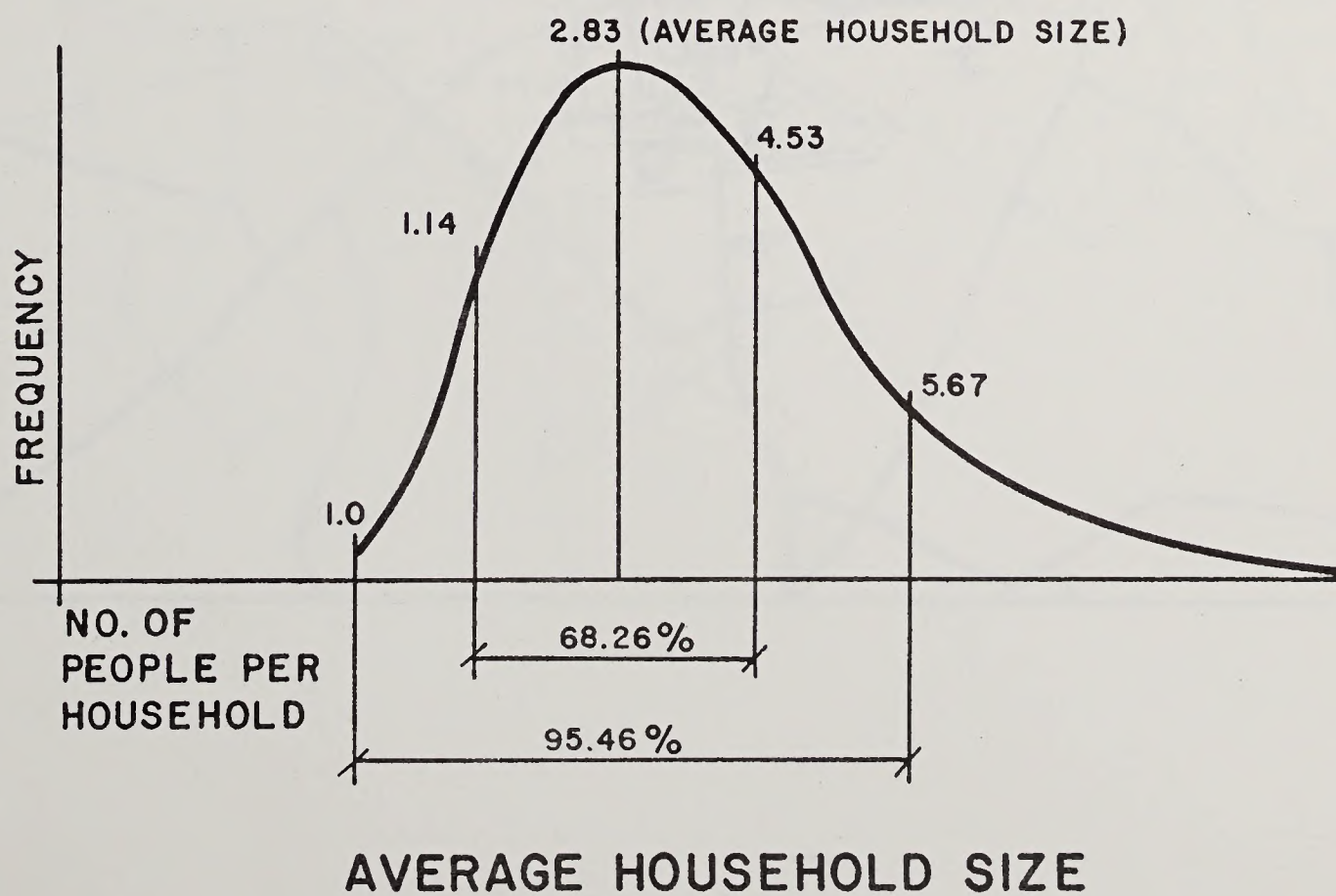


Figure 4



This is a detailed black and white map of a town, likely from a historical or planning document. The map shows a central urban area with a grid-like street pattern, surrounded by rural land with irregular field boundaries. A prominent horizontal road or railway line crosses the center. The map is oriented with North at the top. The central town area is densely packed with streets and buildings, while the surrounding areas are characterized by large, irregularly shaped fields. A major horizontal road or railway line runs through the middle of the town, with several smaller roads branching off. The map is oriented with North at the top. The central town area is densely packed with streets and buildings, while the surrounding areas are characterized by large, irregularly shaped fields. A major horizontal road or railway line runs through the middle of the town, with several smaller roads branching off. The map is oriented with North at the top.

CHAPTER II

Economy

This chapter will examine several economic characteristics of Robersonville which have a close relationship to the housing market. The economic topics to be considered include employment, work centers, wage rates and general conditions which affect the economic climate of the town.

Economic Base

Robersonville originally developed as a market community. It has had one of the largest market areas for tobacco, cotton, peanut and livestock sales within Martin County. In recent years the town appears to have diversified its economy and has become an industrial area as well as a center for commercial activities.

In urban economic theory, the economic base of a community is determined by the percentage of local employment in various economic categories. Local percentages are compared to national percentages and those local figures which are proportionally higher than the national percentages are considered to be "basic" to the local economy. Such basic employment is considered to be similar to the export trade of national economies. In other words, basic employment brings in money from outside the immediate area and thus "drives" the local economy.

In order to determine the economic base of Robersonville (and other information as well) a random sample survey of approximately twenty-five percent of the households within the town was conducted. The survey was designed to be reliable in 95 out of 100 instances within a 2 percent margin for error. The results of the survey indicate that the economic base of the community are within the manufacturing; finance insurance and real estate; public administration and the agricultural categories. The support activities were found to be wholesale and retail trade; services; contract construction and transportation and public utilities (see table 4).

TABLE 4
DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRIAL CATEGORY

	Robersonville		National
Manufacturing	33.33%	(+17.8)	26.09%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	7.41%	(+20.9)	4.91%
Public Administration	11.11%	(+20.5)	5.42%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	19.75%	(+19.5)	20.11%
Services	19.75%	(+19.5)	22.8%
Contract Construction	1.23%	(+21.6)	6.22%
Agriculture	4.94%	(21.2)	3.70%
Mining	----		0.82%
Transportation and Public Utilities	2.47%	(+21.5)	6.69%

The significance of a high basic employment in manufacturing is that areas which possess this trait generally have a very even income distribution. As a general rule, communities which demonstrate this employment characteristics have a more evenly distributed income pattern and there are proportionally fewer extremely wealthy or impoverished individuals within the community. Such statements must be qualified, however, by other economic considerations. A sizeable proportion of the population nevertheless will be in the middle income ranges. This implies that there will be a continued demand for single family detached housing in Robersonville for the foreseeable future.

Income and Employment

The most direct indicator of a community's purchasing power in the housing market is the division of income throughout the town's population. As has been noted income is probably fairly evenly distributed but that statement tells one very little about the amount of money which the general population will have to spend on housing. Direct information concerning income groupings within the town of Robersonville is not available. Figures for Martin County are provided in the 1970 Census of Population but the use of such data may be misleading. The 1970 average per capita income for the County as a whole was 63% of the State average. The town of Robersonville may have had a higher per capita income than Robersonville Township but since the town's population comprised nearly one-half of the townships population it is doubtful that it exceeded the county average.

Recent county figures for insured employment indicate that wage earners working in Martin County are on the average earning higher salaries than the average worker throughout the state (see table 5). This wage advantage does not exist for the Robersonville area. A survey of all the manufacturing concerns within the Robersonville area reveal a lower average wage than that of Martin County as a whole. Average blue collar manufacturing wages within the Robersonville area is \$156.00 per week. This is considerably lower than the average insured wage of \$191.00 per week for Martin County manufacturing employees.

Robersonville may also have lower average household incomes because of relatively high unemployment rates within Martin County. Table 6 shows the continuing high unemployment rates for the county in relation to those of the State (see table 6). The random sample household survey did not attempt to determine the average income level for Robersonville households or their unemployment levels. Information presented in

TABLE 5

AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATES
BY SELECTED CATEGORIES FOR
MARTIN COUNTY AND NORTH CAROLINA 1976

	Martin County	North Carolina
All Categories	\$ 165.83	\$ 164.32
Contract Construction	105.32	171.87
Manufacturing	191.30	171.26
Transportation Communication and Utilities	202.11	228.31
Wholesale and Retail Trade	116.17	142.55

TABLE 6

UNEMPLOYMENT LEVELS FOR MARTIN COUNTY
AND NORTH CAROLINA 1970 - 1976

	Martin County	North Carolina
1970	7.7%	5.9%
1971	7.8%	6.1%
1972	6.4%	4.0%
1973	3.6%	3.5%
1974	6.8%	4.5%
1975	9.7%	----
1976	9.3%	6.2%

TABLE 3

this report indicates that there may be a significant segment of the population in need of governmental assistance in order to secure adequate housing.

In order for a family to be eligible for assisted housing their net income can not exceed 80% of the local median. Since Robersonville has lower average wage levels than Martin County as a whole and since the unemployment levels for Robersonville probably do not differ from those of the county there is a strong likelihood that a significant number of the town's households are eligible for assisted housing.

CHAPTER III

HOUSING INVENTORY

In order to determine the status of housing conditions within Robersonville, a survey of the residential structures was performed. This survey, conducted during October and November 1977, considered only the exterior conditions of the residential units. All residential structures within the town limits were rated. Houses were classified in three (3) general categories:

Single Family Units - A residential structure designed for and used by a single family for occupancy as a separate living quarter.

Multi-Family Unit - A residential structure used for occupancy by more than one family in separate living quarters.

Mobile Home - A residential structure designed and intended for occupancy by one family. Mobile homes differ from conventional single family housing units in that they originally had affixed wheels for moving from the place of manufacture to the residential site. (Note: prefabricated houses are not included in this category)

The main purpose of the housing survey was to examine the structural quality of each housing unit. Structures were examined with particular attention being paid to the conditions of the roof, wall and foundation. After each examination a structure was given one of three ratings which are as follows:

Standard - A housing unit which appears to be physically sound and not in need of structural repairs or maintenance. Structures needing minor surface repairs or maintenance such as paint or window screens were given this rating. Standard structures do not exhibit deficiencies beyond the level of normal maintenance.

Deteriorating - A housing unit that appears to be in need of some kind of structural repairs to the roof, walls or foundation. The relative cost of such repairs would be minor in relationship to the potential value of the structure. Examples of such minor structural problems are roofs with missing shingles or badly rusted tin, excessively weathered cornices deteriorated window sill, deteriorated and sagging porches, warped siding, stilt foundations and foundations in need of repairs.

Dilapidated - Dilapidated housing units exhibit major deficiencies to the extent that they no longer provide adequate shelter to their inhabitants. The potential cost of renovating such structures would be beyond their potential market value.

In addition to these conditions it was noted whether the dwelling unit was occupied or not. New housing construction was noted as were additions or renovations of housing structures.

Survey Results

A total of 696 housing units were surveyed in Robersonville 97% of which were occupied at the time of the survey. Table 6 presents a summary of the findings of the survey for the occupied units within the town. The town was divided into five areas in order to determine specific needs of identifiable sections of the town. The areas were divided along Main, Railroad and Roberson Streets. Information developed from the 1970 Census is available in a manner which divides the town into two areas. The line of division for the Census information is Main Street so comparisons can readily be made between current data and those obtained for 1970.

Of the 23 units which were found to be unoccupied at the time of the survey only 6 were found to be in sound condition; 9 were found to be in deteriorating condition and 8 were found to be in dilapidated condition. The large number of deteriorating units is indicative of a blighting affect upon the town, when housing units are abandoned for lengthy periods of time they fall into considerable disrepair and eventually become unfit as dwellings. At times stringent building code enforcement and tax collection measures can deter the abandonment of deteriorating units by their owners. Proper measures can also be taken to remove dilapidated units so as to reduce the decaying affect upon the neighborhood.

CHAPTER III

Housing Inventory



TABLE 7

NUMERICAL BREAKDOWN
OF
HOUSING SURVEY
(occupied housing)

Section of Town	Single Family Houses in Sound Condition	Single Family Houses in Deteriorating Condition	Single Family Houses in Dilapidated Condition	Multi-Family Housing Units in Sound Condition	Multi-Family Housing Units in Deteriorating Condition	Multi-Family Housing Units in Dilapidated Condition	Mobil Homes
North of Railroad Street and west of Roberson Street	53	9	8	2	-----	-----	2
North of Railroad Street between Roberson and Main Street	71	9	-----	12	2	-----	1
North of Railroad Street and east of Main Street	140	7	1	20	4	-----	11
South of Railroad Street and west of Main Street	141	12	1	16	2	-----	4
South of Railroad Street and east of Main Street	86	31	8	12	5	-----	3

Housing Types

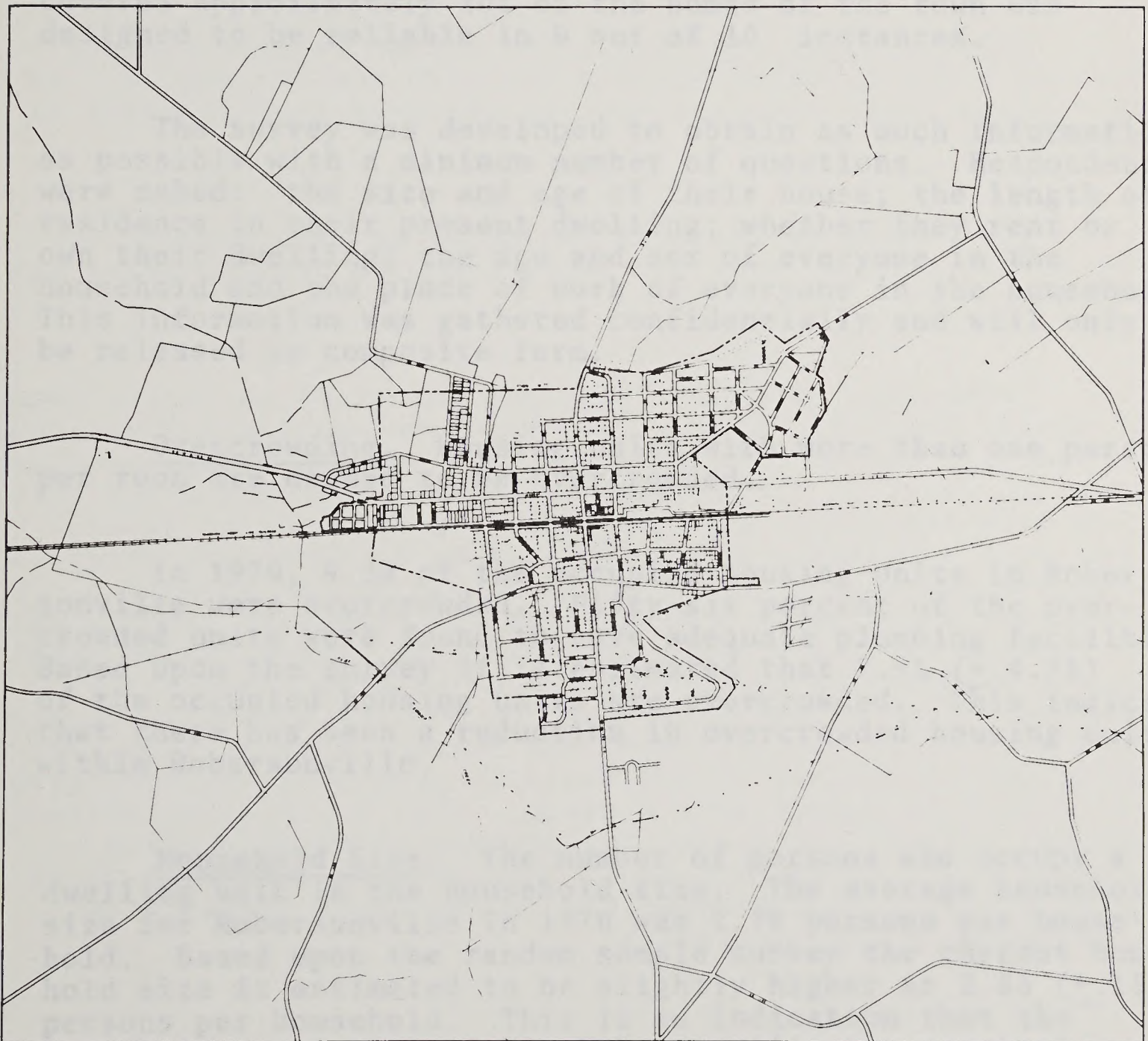
Eighty-six percent of all of the occupied housing units surveyed were of the conventional single family type. Of all the single-family houses twelve (12) percent were found to be in substandard condition and three (3) percent were found to be in dilapidated condition. Eleven (11) percent of the occupied housing units surveyed were multi-family units. Of these multi-family seventeen (17) percent were found to be in deteriorating condition. No multi-family units were found to be dilapidated condition. Three (3) percent of the housing units were found to be mobile homes (see table 6).

CHAPTER IV

Housing Characteristics

The 1970 Census of Housing and the Census of Population can provide valuable information about housing problems. Factors such as overcrowding, household size, adequacy of plumbing facilities, house value and rent can indicate conditions which warrant special attention.

CHAPTER IV Housing Characteristics



CHAPTER IV

Housing Characteristics

The 1970 Census of Housing and the Census of Population can provide valuable information about housing problems. Factors such as overcrowding, household size, adequacy of plumbing facilities house value and rent can indicate conditions which warrant special attention.

While this information is a good indicator of conditions which existed in Robersonville in 1970 many situations have changed since this information was obtained. In order to obtain useable information a random sample survey was taken of the households in Robersonville. This survey which covered approximately 20% of the homes of the town was designed to be reliable in 9 out of 10 instances.

The survey was developed to obtain as much information as possible with a minimum number of questions. Respondents were asked: the size and age of their house; the length of residence in their present dwelling; whether they rent or own their dwelling; the age and sex of everyone in the household and the place of work of everyone in the household. This information was gathered confidentially and will only be released in composite form.

Overcrowding. Housing units with more than one person per room are deemed to be overcrowded.

In 1970, 9.3% of the occupied housing units in Robersonville were overcrowded. Fifty-six percent of the overcrowded units were found to have adequate plumbing facilities. Based upon the survey it is estimated that 7.9% (+ 4.7%) of the occupied housing units are overcrowded. This indicates that there has been a reduction in overcrowded housing units within Robersonville.

Household Size. The number of persons who occupy a dwelling unit is the household size. The average household size for Robersonville in 1970 was 2.78 persons per household. Based upon the random sample survey the current household size is estimated to be slightly higher at 2.83 (+.15) persons per household. This is an indication that the household population within Robersonville has remained relatively stable over the past eight years.

Plumbing Facilities. One indicator of the condition of housing within a community used by the U. S. Bureau of the Census is the lack of one or more plumbing facilities. According to the 1970 Census of Housing 127 or 19% of the occupied housing units lacked one or more plumbing facilities. This figure is below the state average of 23.4% for rural areas during the same period.

Structural Conditions. The 1970 Census of Housing did not evaluate the structural conditions of the housing units but the Land Development Plan adopted in 1969 found 128 units to be substandard within Robersonville. The method used in rating the units was identical to that described in the previous chapter. In 1969 there were 106 dwelling units determined to be deteriorating and 22 units were found to be dilapidated.

Housing Value and Rent. The median owner occupied housing value in Robersonville for 1970 was \$11,100.00. By comparison Black occupied housing averaged less in value at \$7,200.00.

The median amount paid per month in 1970 was \$39.00. The median monthly rent for Negro occupied housing units was \$30.00.

Vacancies. Vacancy rates are important as to the amount of upward mobility which a community can provide its residents. As families become more affluent they tend to vacate smaller units in favor of larger ones. The newly vacated units are then made available for other families desiring to locate into such a suitable unit. The number of vacancies tends to indicate the amount of choice which one has in finding a new residence which meets ones desires and budgetary constraints. If vacancy rates are high, generally the rent or sales price in the market will be moderate given a normal demand for housing. The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development uses a six percent base line vacancy rate as a general guideline in whether or not their housing assistance programs are needed to supply more housing. This six percent average may not reflect the demand for certain kinds of housing. Certain kinds of housing stock such as single bedroom apartments or large family homes may not be given adequate consideration by this criterion.

The vacancy rate in Robersonville for 1970 was 1%. That is 7 units were either vacant, for sale or for rent in 1970 at the time of the census. Based upon the survey of all housing units the November 1977 vacancy rate was found to be 3%. With continued local demand for housing at its present rate it is anticipated that the Robersonville rate will remain below six percent for the foreseeable future.

CHAPTER V

Housing Requirements



CHAPTER V

Housing Requirements



CHAPTER V

Housing Requirements

Housing Need

The term housing need refers to the number of housing units necessary to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing for all people in a given area. This section will examine the number of units necessary to meet present and future housing requirements. The next section will examine the kinds and types of housing units required to meet the projected needs.

As noted in the previous section, in 1969, 128 dwellings were determined to be of substandard condition because of structural characteristics. In 1970, 127 units were found to be of substandard condition because of inadequate plumbing facilities. There is no direct manner to determine how many of the dwellings with inadequate plumbing facilities were also structurally unsound. There is generally a close relationship between the overall condition of a structure and certain singular traits such as the adequacy of the plumbing facility. Because the two figures are so close it is assumed that there is a great deal of overlapping of the two categories and a separate figure for structures which currently have inadequate plumbing facilities have not been developed.

In addition to structural considerations the number of overcrowded units indicate housing need as well. Sixty-two units were determined to be overcrowded in 1970. Overcrowding conditions are not considered to be as important a housing factor as the inadequacy of plumbing facilities because market conditions will often require a certain minimum level of demand before new housing units are constructed.

It is not possible to simply add the total number of overcrowded units to those which were rated substandard because of structural conditions. In 1970 there was an overlapping of these two groups and only 56% of the overcrowded units were found to have complete plumbing facilities. In 1970 the number of substandard units due to overcrowding and structural conditions totaled 162.

The 1977 housing survey revealed 99 housing units to be in substandard condition. (i. e. units rated either as deteriorating or dilapidated). The random sample survey of the households within Robersonville revealed that 7.9% (+ 4.7%) or 53 of the town's housing units are overcrowded. It is assumed that the same relationship between overcrowded conditions and substandard housing due to deterioration or dilapidation exists currently as it existed in 1970. Based upon the 1970 proportion 30 additional units are needed because of overcrowded conditions.

Robersonville has not vigorously enforced its building and housing codes in the past. The town is presently, however, in the process of more strictly enforcing its codes. Usually when a building code is conservatively enforced, on the average, substandard housing units are demolished twice as often as they are refurbished in order to meet code requirements. Although every effort should be made to retain existing structures it is assumed that two thirds (66%) of the substandard units will be replaced. Applying these relationships 65 new units will be needed to replace the units rated substandard because of structural features. The total number of additional units currently needed is 95.

In order to forecast new housing need the projected population for Robersonville must be considered. Once this is determined it can be divided by the average household size to estimate the number of housing units which will be required by the population increase. As stated in Chapter 1 of this report the projected population growth rate for Robersonville is 8.15% per year. This yields a total population of 2450 individuals by the year 2000.

The 1970 average household size was 2.78 persons per household and the 1978 estimate is 2.83 persons per household. The closeness of these two figures indicates that there has been very little change in household size within Robersonville over the past nine years. Consequently for computational purposes a household size figure of 2.8 was used. Using the projected population and the average household size there will be 143 additional units required in Robersonville by the year 2000. This in addition to those units required by present need yield a total of 238 additional units over the next 22 years. This yields an average increase of 11 additional units per year is roughly 3 units per year higher than the average for the previous nine years.

Housing Demand

With some general population and economic factors and gross dwelling unit requirements identified it is possible to estimate the quantity and types of dwelling units that will be in demand in the future. Since the demand for different types of dwelling units is affected by national economic conditions a discussion of the recent economics of home buying will be presented.

To identify the quantity and types of dwelling units which will be in demand in the future it is important to determine the current distribution of housing types. Table 8 presents the current housing distribution based upon the random sample household survey.

For the future, it is assumed that the average distribution which currently exists will continue with only slight alteration. Thus, the average percentage dwelling units that existed in 1977 is applied to the projected total number of housing units required by the year 2000. The forecasted number and type of additional dwellings required through the year 2000 is presented on table 9.

It is clear from table 9 that a mixture of various dwelling unit types and price ranges will be required in Robersonville in the coming years. Although the single family house should retain its major role, multi-family dwellings, modular units and prefabricated housing may play an increasingly significant role in filling housing requirements.

The forecast for alternative solutions other than single family houses seems justifiable for several reasons. There appears to be an increasing number of elderly single person households in Robersonville. This group generally constitutes a major market for specialized rental housing. The large number of local manufacturing firms and the high proportion of local employees in manufacturing may cause an increased demand for rental housing. Another factor is the cost of buying a home given current economic conditions.

Based upon national averages the cost of buying and maintaining a new single family house may soon be out of reach for a significant proportion of Americans. Between 1955 and 1975 the median value of a home increased 191% while total disposable income increased 189%. Moreover, interest rates have risen significantly from 4.875% to about 9.000% over the same twenty year period. Other costs have risen as well; property taxes, liability insurance and maintenance and repair costs have all increased approximately 250% since 1955. Overall, total monthly housing expenses have increased 305% over the last twenty-three years.

As with the homeowner, the renter has not escaped inflationary living costs. However, many people especially those with low to middle incomes are forced to rent simply because they can not afford to enter the home-buying market under existing economic conditions. The annual income needed to qualify for a median priced home of \$39,000 is about \$21,000. The majority of Americans today earn less than that per year.

TABLE 8.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING UNITS
BY SIZE OF STRUCTURE

(Based Upon A 1977 Random Sample Household Survey)

	<u>Sample Size</u>	<u>% Share</u>
1 Room Units	----	0
2 Room Units	----	0
3 Room Units	6	4.8
4 Room Units	24	19.4
5 Room Units	32	25.8
6 Room Units	38	30.6
7 Room Units	9	7.3
8 Room Units	8	6.5
9 Or More Room Units	7	5.6

TABLE 9
PROTECTED DISTRIBUTION OF ADDITIONAL HOUSING UNITS
THROUGH THE YEAR 2000

	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Proportion</u>
1 Room Units	5	2%
2 Room Units	7	3%
3 Room Units	12	5%
4 Room Units	45	19%
5 Room Units	60	25%
6 Room Units	71	30%
7 Room Units	16	7%
8 Room Units	12	5%
9 Or More Room Units	10	4%

CHAPTER VI

Housing Goals and Objectives



CHAPTER VI

HOUSING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The public has the responsibility for helping to provide safe, adequate and decent housing to those who cannot, through their own efforts or through the vagaries of the private market place, provide for themselves. The establishment of goals can aid in the clarification of complex problems. They are required to provide a sound basis for realizing intended benefits. In order to assure a continued effort in improving housing conditions in Robersonville the Planning Board developed the following goals. The goals are followed by a list of objectives which can be implemented over a specified period of time in order to reach the desired end.

Goal: Assure a variety of housing opportunities.

Objectives: Broaden the range of housing types available through contacting private and public developers (1979).

Develop an Initial Housing Element and consider a housing assistance plan.

Encourage construction of new homes to increase the housing supply and promote ownership through citizen education programs (1979).

Goal: Assure sound housing for all town residents.

Objectives:

Seek funds for programs which improve deteriorating neighborhoods and substandard housing (1978).

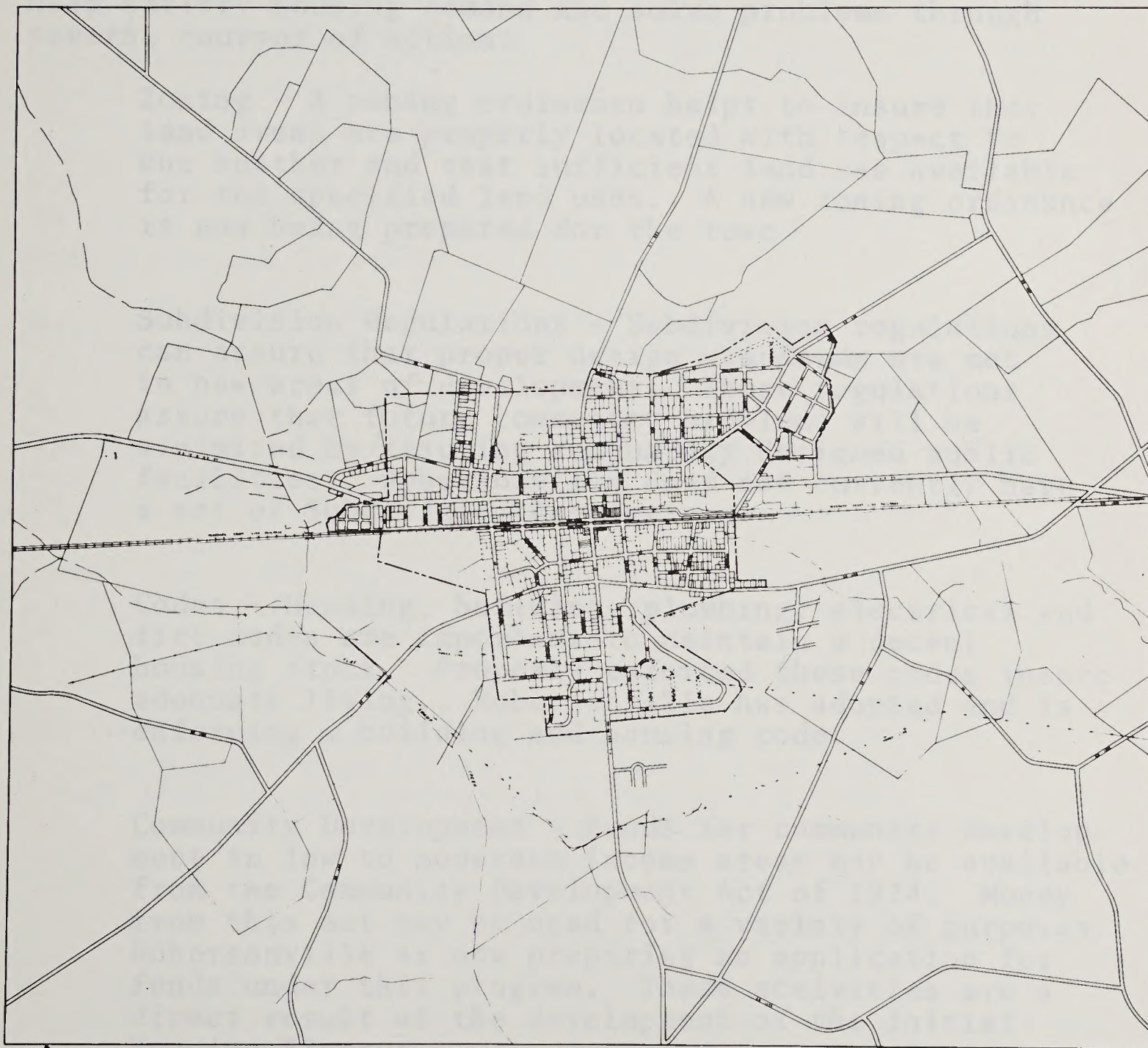
Protect existing established neighborhoods from intrusions of incompatible uses through proper zoning and subdivision regulations (1979).

Improve the working of the process by which unsafe buildings are inspected and evaluated (1979).

Proceed with condemnation procedures on destroyed structures (1978).

CHAPTER VII

Housing Programs



CHAPTER VII

HOUSING PROGRAMS

Public Policies and Activities

Many housing needs and demands will have to be met through some type of federally assisted programs. The current need which has already been described will require assistance through one or more of the programs, which have already been outlined.

Units of local government may alleviate housing needs, help satisfy housing demand and solve problems through several courses of action:

Zoning - A zoning ordinance helps to insure that land areas are properly located with respect to one another and that sufficient land use is available for the specified land uses. A new zoning ordinance is now being prepared for the town.

Subdivision Regulations - Subdivision regulations can assure that proper design standards are met in new areas of development. These regulations assure that future community problems will be minimized by assuring adequately designed public facilities. Robersonville does not currently have a set of Subdivision Regulations.

Codes - Housing, building, plumbing, electrical and fire codes are important to maintain a decent housing stock. Properly enforced these codes insure adequate living. Robersonville has adopted and is enforcing a building and housing code.

Community Development - Funds for community development in low to moderate income areas may be available from the Community Development Act of 1974. Money from this act may be used for a variety of purposes. Robersonville is now preparing an application for funds under this program. These activities are a direct result of the development of the Initial Housing Element.

Planning - Proper planning can aid in meeting housing needs and demands by providing information which can be used to find satisfactory locations for new housing and to assure that new and existing neighborhoods are provided with adequate community facilities and services.

Private Activities - As housing costs continue to rise, it will be the task of the private housing industry to help make technological breakthroughs in such areas as building materials and new methods of construction in an effort to build a more economic house.

Non-Discrimination Policies

The town of Robersonville has a high degree of racial integration in housing. This is noted in the application Community Development Funds (May 1978). In order to assure that induced housing segregation does not occur through racial prejudice several measures are currently being taken by town officials:

- 1) An open housing ordinance is now being prepared for consideration by the Board of Commissioners.
- 2) The development of a housing opportunities Plan is currently being considered by the planning board.
- 3) The town is applying for Community Development Funds and is complying with all non-discrimination and fair housing requirements.
- 4) A general review of all local codes, ordinances and policies to remove discriminatory restrictions will occur with the development of the open housing ordinance.
- 5) Cooperation by town board officials with private concerns who are seeking to sponsor workable housing programs and seeking risk capital for special development venture.

Planning Coordination

Government coordination in the housing field is particularly important, as many housing problems often cannot and should not be controlled by one level of government. In the future, regional allocation and cooperative ventures will play a crucial role in forecasting the required housing development. All federally funded housing projects within Robersonville will as a matter of course be reviewed for consistency with state and regional housing policies.

The information used to develop this analysis was based upon the same data used to develop the Update of the Land Development Plan. The policies and goals and objectives of this Housing Element are totally consistent with those of the Land Development Plan Update. Future Community Facilities Policies will be based upon the Land Development Plan and the Housing Element. Allocations of housing to specific areas was not provided in this report because it is provided in the Land Development Plan.

Evaluation

It is recommended that a progress report be made at the end of one year period for the next three years. This report should contain the number of new housing units started and completed over the previous year and a breakdown between new privately financed dwelling units and governmentally assisted ones should be made. The report should also contain an evaluation of the goals and objectives for that year and explanation should be made if they are not 80% complete. In some instances it may be necessary to reprioritize objectives and their implementation if unforeseen difficulties arise.

This report should be made by the chairman of the Planning Board and assistance in the preparation of the report should be provided by the Building Official, the Zoning Administrator and the Chief Administrative Officer of the town. The report should be made to the Town Board no later than the second meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the year.

APPENDIX A

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Pursuant to the requirements and guidelines established by the National Environmental Policy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality, the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the North Carolina Environmental Policy Act and Section 600.65 (b) of the 1977 Federal Register concerning housing element guidelines, the following statement outlines the general impacts which this housing element will have upon the environment of Robersonville.

Abstract of the Housing Element

The Initial Housing Element for Robersonville includes an analysis of the factors affecting housing conditions and the increase of the housing stock of the town. The factors considered included population and economic trends, housing conditions, crowding conditions, housing needs and community facilities availability. Based upon an analysis of these conditions and upon the goals and objectives determined by the Robersonville planning board future housing growth is projected for the town. Accompanying the housing element is a discussion of public actions and other measures recommended to achieve implementation of the housing element.

Environmental Effects

Beneficial Effects

- 1) More efficient use of existing housing stock
- 2) Improvement of aesthetic conditions and elimination of blighting housing conditions.
- 3) Elimination of unsanitary housing conditions and elimination of potential health hazards.
- 4) Redevelopment and infill building is encouraged to lesson the demand and use of undeveloped land.
- 5) Adoption and enforcement of zoning and subdivision regulations conforming to the Land Use Plan is recommended to assure that housing development will occur in an orderly manner. Vegetation and natural areas can be protected by these regulation as well.

Adverse Effects

- 1) As even well-planned new development occurs, some natural vegetation will be lost and there will be some increases in storm water run-off. A larger population will mean an increase in sewer effluent and solid waste production.
- 2) As additional housing development occurs, open space will be consumed.
- 3) Construction of new water and sewer lines and new streets could cause some short term adverse environmental impacts such as dust, sedimentation and destruction of natural vegetation.

Unavoidable Adverse Environmental Effects

Increases in storm water run-off and in waste products, loss of some natural vegetation, loss of some productive agricultural lands can not be stopped if orderly growth is to occur.

Alternatives

Residential growth occurring without a properly designed program could result in much more inefficient land use; over-burdening of public utilities; congestion of transportation facilities and intrusion into environmentally acceptable methods of disposing of its waste products and improving the living environment of its residents is predicated upon some economic and physical growth.

Alternative housing patterns of development have been considered but based upon the goals and objectives the recommended pattern is the most conservative of resources given the existing housing demand. The recommended arrangement is believed to be preferable for the following environmentally significant reasons:

- 1) the recommended housing development form is compact requiring fewer new streets and shorter public utility lines
- 2) future housing development is recommended for areas which may be served with public utilities without great additional public expense.
- 3) conservation of the existing housing stock is recommended thus preserving commitment of additional natural resources.

Local:

Land Development Plan
Zoning Ordinance
Building and Plumbing Codes
Open Housing Ordinance

APPENDIX B

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ASSESSMENT

Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966; the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; General Statutes of the State of North Carolina concerning archeological and historical sites and Section 600.66 (d) of the 1977 Federal Register concerning housing element guidelines the following statement outlines the impacts which this housing element will have upon areas of historic or cultural concern within Robersonville and the immediate surrounding area.

Abstract of the Housing Element

The Initial Housing Element for Robersonville includes an analysis of the factors affecting housing conditions and the increase of the housing stock of the town. The factors considered include population and economic trends, housing conditions, crowding conditions, housing needs and community facilities availability. Based upon an analysis of these conditions and upon the goals and objectives determined by the Robersonville planning board, future housing growth is projected for the town. Accompanying the housing element is a discussion of public actions and other measures recommended to achieve implementation of the housing element.

Impacts Upon Properties of Historic or Cultural Concern

Beneficial Effects

- 1) Preservation of identified properties of historic or archeologic significance.
- 2) Retention of existing usable housing.
- 3) Preservation of historically distinct development patterns through infilling of vacant space.
- 4) Reuse of existing facilities and development of existing structures for residential purposes.
- 5) Cooperation with areawide historical planning.

Adverse Effects

There should be no direct adverse effects upon historical or cultural sites because of the Initial Housing Element. Some old structures may be lost during the period covered by the housing element because it is not feasible to convert them to residential use due to economic or other considerations.

Alternatives

Growth occurring without a future housing program could result in haphazard growth and endanger known historic or cultural areas. The towns ability to support historically and culturally responsible activities is dependent upon growth and development. Preservation of all existing structures is not desirable or economically feasible.

Alternative residential development programs were considered before the final recommendations were made. The recommended arrangement is consistent with the Land Development Plan and stated town policies. The recommended arrangement is felt to be acceptable for the following historically and culturally significant reasons:

- 1) The recommended housing element affects no properties on the National Register list of Historic Properties.
- 2) No archeological sites listed by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources are Affected.
- 3) The housing element advocates reuse of existing structures for housing purposes.
- 4) Historically significant development patterns will be preserved through infilling of vacant spaces.

Impact of Plans on Long-Term Maintenance of Properties

The only foreseeable impact of the housing element on the long-term maintenance of historical and archeological sites should be beneficial. The proposed program should also protect the recognized historical properties and should seek to identify and protect other properties having historical and archeological significance during the planning period.

Applicable Federal, State and Local Controls

Federal: National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
Executive Order 11593, May 1971, Protection
and Enhancement of Environmental Quality
The Archeological and Historic Pre-
servation Act of 1974
"Protection of Historic and Cultural
Properties" Federal Register
January 25, 1974

State: Protection of Properties on National
Register - General Statute 121-12 (a)
State Environmental Policy Act - General
Statute 113-A, Article 1
Archeological Salvage in Highway
Construction - General Statute 136-42-1
Provision for Cultural Resources
in Dredging and Filling Operations -
General Statute 113-229

Local: Zoning Ordinance
Building and Housing Code

Intent to Survey Areas for Cultural, Archeological and Historical Significance

The town of Robersonville has complied with appropriate federal and state regulations. At present there are no National Register properties in the corporate limits or near vicinity of Robersonville. There are no known archeologically significant areas near Robersonville. The Division of Archives and History North Carolina Department Cultural Resources was contacted and they indicate that no known archeological sites are near Robersonville.

Before residential development occurs in previously open sites a survey of the area to be altered will be made. This survey will take into account any cultural resources which may be affected by the proposed development.

Although there are no sites within the Robersonville vicinity which are currently on the National Register of Historic Places there is a site under consideration:

